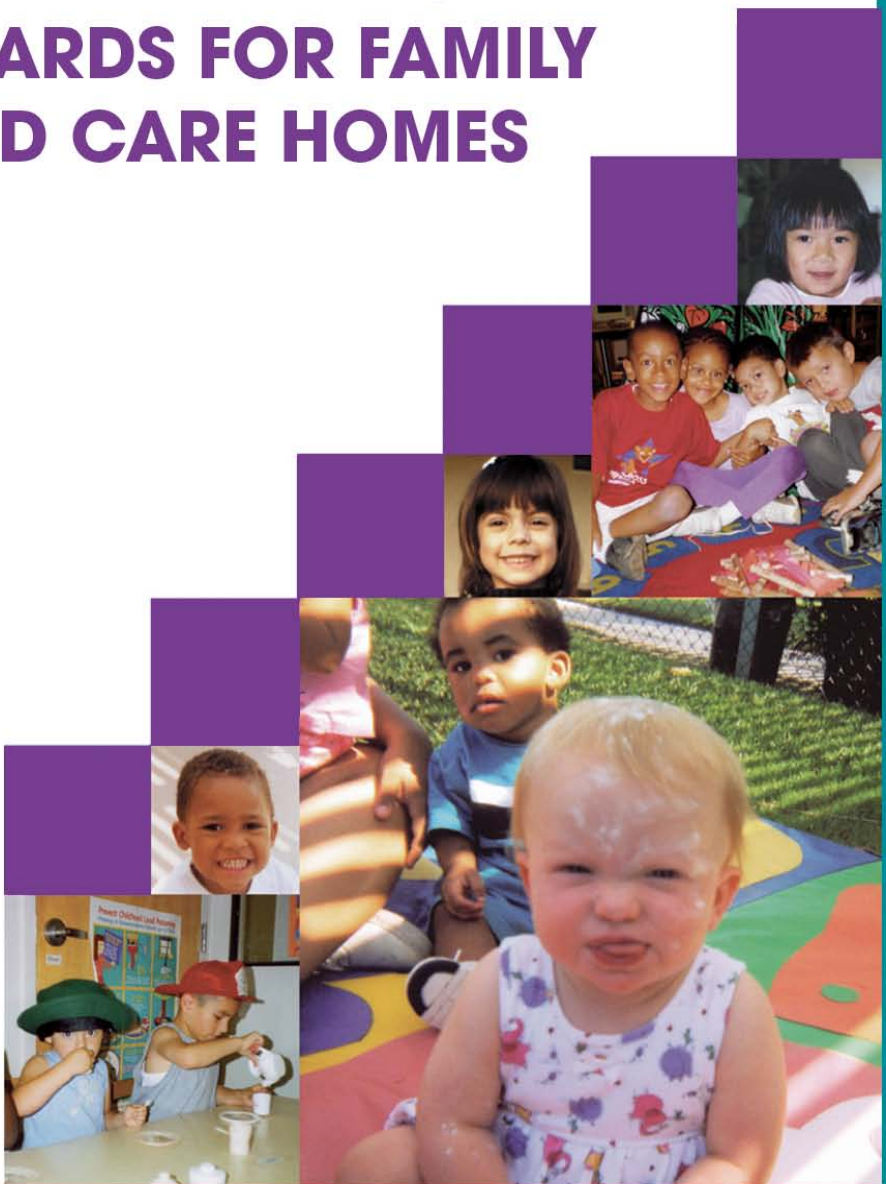


Steps To Excellence Program

Promoting Quality Child Care

QUALITY RATING STANDARDS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES



HOW DOES THE **STEP** PROGRAM MEASURE CHILD CARE QUALITY?

The STEP Quality Rating and Improvement System evaluate six areas of a child care program's operation. These areas include:



1) Regulatory Compliance



2) Teacher-Child Relationships



3) Learning Environment



4) Inclusion of Children with Special Needs



5) Staff Qualifications & Working Conditions









6) Family & Community Connections



Each area has a distinct group of standards, divided into five quality rating levels. Take time to thoroughly review this booklet to understand STEP's quality standards for each area. You can then use this information to determine your child care program's quality level and plan improvements.




QUALITY RATING STANDARDS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

QUALITY AREAS	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality					
1). REGULATORY COMPLIANCE 	All child care programs rated by STEP hold a child care license from California's Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) for at least 12 months. STEP has confirmed the child care licensee is: 1) <u>not</u> probationary; 2) <u>not</u> involved in a compliance plan; and 3) has <u>not</u> been fined for failing to correct a deficiency in timely manner or for repeated offenses.									
2). TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS 	<div>2A). TEACHER-CHILD RATIOS & 2B). GROUP SIZE QUALITY STANDARDS:</div> <div>All family child care homes rated by STEP must meet licensing regulations relevant to adult/child ratios and children's group sizes as mandated by the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 12, Chapter 3 of the Manual of Policies and Procedure for Community Care Licensing:</div> <div>Small Family Child Care Homes*: 4 infants only; -or- 6 children, no more than three of which are under 2 years old; -or- 8 children, at least two of which are 6 years or older, and no more than two children under 2 years old.</div> <div>Large Family Child Care Homes*: 12 children, no more than four of which are under 2 years old; -or- 14 children, at least two of which are 6 years or older, and no more than three children under 2 years old.</div> <div>*Note: Community Care Licensing regulations define family child care as regularly provided care, protection and supervision of children, in the caregiver's own home, for periods of less than 24 hours per day, while the parents or authorized caregivers are away. A "small" family child care home provider is licensed to care for up to 8 children. A "large" family child care home provider is licensed to care for up to 14 children when there is an assistant provider in the home. More information about child care licensing regulations can be found at www.cclcd.ca.gov.</div> <div>2C). ADULT INVOLVEMENT SCALE (AIS) QUALITY STANDARDS:</div> <table><tr><td>Average score on the AIS is less than 3.0.</td><td>Average score on the AIS is between 3.0 and 3.9.</td><td>Average score on the AIS is between 4.0 and 4.9.</td><td>Average score on the AIS is between 5.0 and 5.9.</td><td>Average score on the AIS is equal to or over 6.</td></tr></table>					Average score on the AIS is less than 3.0.	Average score on the AIS is between 3.0 and 3.9.	Average score on the AIS is between 4.0 and 4.9.	Average score on the AIS is between 5.0 and 5.9.	Average score on the AIS is equal to or over 6.
Average score on the AIS is less than 3.0.	Average score on the AIS is between 3.0 and 3.9.	Average score on the AIS is between 4.0 and 4.9.	Average score on the AIS is between 5.0 and 5.9.	Average score on the AIS is equal to or over 6.						
3). LEARNING ENVIRONMENT 	<div>3A). ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALE (ERS) QUALITY STANDARDS:</div> <table><tr><td>Average overall ERS score is less than 3.0.</td><td>Average overall ERS score is 3, verifying custodial and some needs are being met.</td><td>Average overall ERS score is 4, verifying custodial needs and more basic development needs are being met that in Step 2.</td><td>Average overall ERS score is 5, verifying basic dimensions of development care are present.</td><td>Average overall ERS score is 6, verifying additional dimensions of high-quality care are present.</td></tr></table>					Average overall ERS score is less than 3.0.	Average overall ERS score is 3, verifying custodial and some needs are being met.	Average overall ERS score is 4, verifying custodial needs and more basic development needs are being met that in Step 2.	Average overall ERS score is 5, verifying basic dimensions of development care are present.	Average overall ERS score is 6, verifying additional dimensions of high-quality care are present.
Average overall ERS score is less than 3.0.	Average overall ERS score is 3, verifying custodial and some needs are being met.	Average overall ERS score is 4, verifying custodial needs and more basic development needs are being met that in Step 2.	Average overall ERS score is 5, verifying basic dimensions of development care are present.	Average overall ERS score is 6, verifying additional dimensions of high-quality care are present.						
4). INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS 	<div>4A). IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS QUALITY STANDARDS:</div> <table><tr><td>No criteria.</td><td>The Provider is aware of support available through basic early intervention services provided by the local Regional Center and the local school district(s).</td><td>Meets Step2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.</td><td>Meets Step2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.</td><td>Meets Step 2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.</td></tr></table>					No criteria.	The Provider is aware of support available through basic early intervention services provided by the local Regional Center and the local school district(s).	Meets Step2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.	Meets Step2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.	Meets Step 2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.
No criteria.	The Provider is aware of support available through basic early intervention services provided by the local Regional Center and the local school district(s).	Meets Step2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.	Meets Step2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.	Meets Step 2+: Provider makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool available to all families enrolling their children in the family child care home.						

QUALITY AREAS	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
4). INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS 			Provider works with families to screen their children within 90 days of enrollment. Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner. Provider uses screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment, such as: the local Regional Center, the local school district and/or other resources.	Provider works with families to screen their children within 90 days of enrollment and at least once a year thereafter. Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner. Provider uses screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment. Provider uses screening results to implement interventions strategies and adaptations as appropriate.	Provider works with families to screen their children within 45 days of enrollment and at least twice a year thereafter. Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner. Program staff use screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment. Provider uses screening results to implement interventions strategies and adaptations as appropriate.
	4B). INCLUSION QUALITY STANDARDS: No criteria. Families of children with special needs are welcomed to the home. A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs. Families of children with special needs are welcomed to the home. A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment <u>and</u> activities are implemented to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs. Meets Step 3+: Clear and explicit intervention strategies and adaptations are based on assessment results and are implemented to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs. Meets Step 4+: A monitoring system is implemented to observe and record children's progress and to determine if further assessment is needed.				
	4C). SPECIAL NEEDS TRAINING QUALITY STANDARDS: No criteria. Licensee has completed in the past 3 years professional development training that prepares them to work with children with special needs. Licensee has completed specialized college coursework <u>or</u> , in the past 3 years, has completed professional development training that prepares her/him to work with children who have special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools. Licensee has completed specialized college coursework <u>and</u> , in the past 3 years, has completed professional development training that prepares her/him to work with children who have special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools. Licensee and assistants (if applicable) have each completed specialized college coursework <u>and</u> , in the past 18 months, have completed professional development training that prepares them to work with children with special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools.				
5). STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & WORKING CONDITIONS 	5Ai). LICENSED PROVIDER QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	Licensee has completed 15 hours of health and safety training and holds cardio/pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification.	Licensee holds/has applied for a Child Development Assistant Permit.	Licensee holds/has applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit.	Licensee has an Associate of Arts (AA) in Child Development -or- Has an AA in another field and has completed 24 early childhood education (ECE) units -or- Holds/has applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit and is accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).	Licensee has Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Child Development -or- Has an BA in another field with at least 12 ECE units.

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5). STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & WORKING CONDITIONS 	5Aii). ASSISTANT QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	No criteria.	Assistant(s) have completed 15 hours of health and safety training and hold CPR certifications.	Meets Step 2+: Assistant(s) have either completed 30 hours of ECE training in the past 24 months -or- Hold/have applied for a Child Development Assistant Permit.	Meets Step 2+: Assistant(s) hold/have applied for a Child Development Assistant Permit <u>and</u> have completed 12 hours of child development training in the past 12 months.	Meets Step 2+: Assistant(s) hold/have applied for a Child Development Assistant Permit and have completed 21 hours of child development training in the past 36 months.
	5B). STAFF STABILITY QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	Parents are notified in advance when a substitute provider will be responsible for their children.	Currently employed assistants have (on average) been employed for 12 months.	Currently employed assistants have (on average) been employed for 18 months.	Currently employed assistants have (on average) been employed for 24 months.	Currently employed assistants have (on average) been employed for more than 24 months.
	5C). WORKING CONDITIONS QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	Assistants (who are not family members) receive written job descriptions and are paid at least minimum wage.	Meets Step 1+: Assistants receive written confirmation of job, salary and hours.	Meets Step 2+: Licensee conducts an annual written evaluation of Assistants (who are not family members) and regularly informs all assistants of training opportunities.	Meets STEP 3+: Professional growth plans are in place for Licensee and Assistants (who are not family members).	Meets STEP 4+: Licensee provides professional development training to other child care providers.
6). FAMILY & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS 	FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS QUALITY STANDARDS:				
	Licensee maintains a Parent Handbook which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission policy; Discipline policy; Notification of parents' rights, including visiting the program; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign-in and out procedures. 	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 3 parent involvement strategies from Section 6A. Applies at least 3 parent communication strategies from Section 6B.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 4 parent involvement strategies from Section 6A. Applies at least 4 parent communication strategies from Section 6B. Applies at least 4 parent support strategies from Section 6C. Applies at least 4 parent-community connection strategies from Section 6D.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 5 parent involvement strategies from Section 6A. Applies at least 5 parent communication strategies from Section 6B. Applies at least 5 parent support strategies from Section 6C. Applies at least 5 parent-community connection strategies from Section 6D.	Meets Step 1+: Applies at least 6 parent involvement strategies from Section 6A. Applies at least 6 parent communication strategies from Section 6B. Applies at least 6 parent support strategies from Section 6C. Applies at least 6 parent-community connection strategies from Section 6D.

QUALITY AREAS	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<div>6). FAMILY & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS</div> <div>  </div>	SECTION 6A): STRATEGIES TO WELCOME & INVOLVE FAMILIES				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A1). Child care program offers a comprehensive orientation to all families.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A2). Program has a parent handbook that describes the its educational philosophy, policies and procedures of the family child care home.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A3). Program provides written materials in home language(s) of families.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A4). Program communicates in home languages of families, including securing adults to translate as needed.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A5). A variety of opportunities exist for parents to contribute to the child care program (e.g. in-class helpers, field trips, donated items).				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A6). Program implements activities/materials that incorporate the cultures of enrolled families and the community at large.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A7). Program hosts an annual group activities for children and their families (e.g. family picnic, potluck).				
	<input type="checkbox"/> A8). Program uses creative strategies to adapt activities and schedules to meet family needs.				
	SECTION 6B): FAMILY COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B1). Program uses a communication system that uses families' preferred communication means.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B2). Provider is available on a daily basis to discuss daily occurrences and/or concerns with families.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B3). Provider offers to meet with each family annually to discuss their child's progress.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B4). Provider offers to meet with each family twice a year to discuss their child's progress.; additional parent available by request.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B5). Program completes an annual, written developmental report for each child.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B6). Calendars of daily schedule and activities are readily available to families.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B7). Program uses a group information dissemination system, such as a newsletter.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> B8). Program offers families opportunities to help shape curriculum and program practices.				
	SECTION 6C): STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE FAMILY STRENGTHS				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C1). Program offers opportunities for mutual support among families.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C2). Program offers opportunities for families to share/exchange books, toys, clothing, etc.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C3). Program offers information and coaching about healthy child growth and development.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C4). Program works with families to implement strategies to create consistency between home practices and the developmentally appropriate practices.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C5). Program offers families child-specific, home-based activity ideas based on child's talents and opportunities for growth.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C6). Program creates family support plans and conducts an annual review of such plans (or more often as needed).				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C7.) Program offers training and support for parents to develop their advocacy skills.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> C8). Program offers support and encouragement for parents to become better informed primary decision makers for their child.				
	SECTION 6D): PARENT/COMMUNITY CONNECTION STRATEGIES				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D1). Program cultivates working relationships with public and community-based services (e.g. health, education, and social services).				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D2). Program develops and maintains a current list of community resources.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D3). Qualified program staff participate in assessment/evaluation meetings with families (e.g. Individualized Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings).				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D4). Program staff initiate discussions about kindergarten at least one year prior to kindergarten entry.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D5). Program helps families navigate community resources and links families to identified liaisons from community agencies as needed.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D6). Program invites community programs to share their areas of expertise with staff, parents and children (e.g. library, local artists, police, story tellers, etc).				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D7). Program informs families of relevant, local community events.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> D8). Program relays policy changes at local, state or national levels that effect early care and education services to families.				



If you have any questions, please contact our office.

Thank you!



Los Angeles County Office of Child Care

*STEP is a program of the Los Angeles County
Policy Roundtable for Child Care*

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